

## Timber Advisory Council Meeting Notes

August 12, 2016

Attending in person: Scott Robbins, Mike McCuiston, Nick Monkevich, Debbie Begalle, Roger Mech, Bill O'Neill, Jerry Grossman, JR Richardson, Gary Melow, Charlie Becker, Jon Lamy, Brenda Haskill

On the phone: Donna LaCourt, Steve Shine, and Larry Leefers

JR Richardson opened the meeting at 10:04 am

Introductions made. Call for additions to the agenda. Deb noted that she would provide a brief update regarding the 2 forest certification audits that recently concluded. These will be given prior to lunch.

First agenda item was a recap and brief summary of an issue between MDOT and the Escanaba and Lake Superior Railroad Company. All documents were provided to the group in the handouts. The TAC penned and adopted a resolution to Governor Snyder regarding its support of E&LS. The resolution will be presented to the Governor once it is reviewed by Director Creagh.

Larry Leefers reviewed and provided a report to the group: "Forest Products Industries' Economic Contributions to Michigan's Economy in 2014". The high point of the report is that 4 of the 5 goals have been achieved. Leefers noted that the TAC will need to develop some concrete examples regarding why the increase in jobs has occurred so the message is delivered appropriately. There is a good deal of information to increase the positive message about the forest industry.

Roger Mech gave a broad overview of the HRD – red pine root rot and its history and status in the state. Industry wide impacts will continue to be felt in certain areas from this native fungal disease. Control measures on state and federal lands were discussed that included stump applications on harvest within 5 miles of a known outbreak. There will be follow-up conversations with loggers and forest industry folks.

Jerry Grossman updated the group on his sub-group meeting "Limiting Factors across Ownerships". Meeting went well. Group doesn't feel a need to meet again. Full details can be found in the attached handout.

Debbie Begalle gave a brief recap of the two surveillance audits recently completed. The FSC & SFI auditors selected the Pigeon, the Soo, and the Cadillac management units for audits this year. Preliminary findings were very positive and only one minor CAR (corrective action request) was issued to update the SFI number on the DNR website.

The commercial forest audit performed by the state's Office of Auditor General was equally good with the exception of some missing certificates for land owners' forest management plans that weren't on file. Expenditures of FDF were found to be appropriate in the audit.

Dan Kennedy joined the meeting via conference call to review the status of the Northern Long-eared Bat and the development of the Lakes States Forest Management Bat Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP). The documents he referenced were distributed to the group. The funding to develop the HCP is 90% grant money and the remaining 10% will be split between Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. The TAC and Forest Management Advisory Committee (FMAC) are being proposed as entities to review the particulars of the HCP as it's drafted.

Bill O'Neill and Deb Begalle provided an update on the Good Neighbor Authority. There are similarities between the DNR sale specs and USFS sale specs and differences as well but all the issues have been dealt with and the process is successfully moving forward. The DNR is working with the 3 national forests in Michigan to get as much of the preplanning done on as many timber sales as possible so that DNR can maximize its timber sale preparation efforts.

Donna LaCourt with MDARD provided a brief update on the export market status. She noted that they are working hard to get a higher participation rate from forest products manufacturing businesses. They have access to the same free services that all other Michigan manufacturers do but the participation rate is very low.

The topic of TAC accomplishments and setting goals for FY17 for the TAC will be handled in a separate meeting.

The meeting was adjourned by J.R. Richardson at 2:18 pm.